To begin with, I would like to welcome the beginning of the implementation of the “grain agreements” reached in Istanbul on July 22 of this year. On August 1, the first ship (carrying maize) under the flag of Sierra Leone left the port of Odessa and set sail for Lebanon. We trust that Kiev will fulfil its obligations to ensure the safety of vessels at Ukrainian Black Sea ports and in its territorial waters. At the same time, to fully resolve the food problem it is necessary for Western countries to ensure that Russian fertiliser and food can reach world markets, i.e. that they remove the financial and logistical obstacles caused by anti-Russian restrictions that they have imposed.

This is exactly what is being publicly and loudly demanded by, for example, African countries, which are so “taken care of” by the West (primarily by Washington). The Africans say that Western countries are themselves creating the food problem, blocking payment options, transport logistics, and then telling stories about how the world is threatened by famine.

One gets the impression that the Western mainstream media has already become so far removed from normal objective work, having become a propaganda tool for liberal regimes, that these same regimes no longer receive reliable information from other parts of the world about what is happening in the international arena. Apparently, they do not hear in the West (they do not show it on TV) what leaders and professionals are saying about the food problem in African countries. They are perfectly aware of who is behind the aggravation of the situation.

The removal of financial and logistical obstacles is stipulated by the bilateral Memorandum of Understanding between the Russian Federation and the UN Secretariat on facilitating access of Russian food and fertiliser to the world markets. The agreements reached in Istanbul are of a package nature. This term is used by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. In this connection, we warn against attempts to “wrap up” or not implement the second part of the package. Otherwise, the world may lose tens of millions of tons of Russian grain because of the West’s irresponsible policy. No

matter how hard the Western mainstream media tries, the recipient countries understand who is behind the hurdles to food delivery.

Meanwhile, the special military operation continues in Ukraine. Despite the Western countries' support for the Kiev regime, we are consistently pursuing its goals and objectives to protect civilians in the DPR and LPR, to demilitarise and denazify Ukraine, and to eliminate threats to Russia's security.

Peaceful life is already being restored in the liberated Lugansk and Kherson regions and the territories of the DPR that have been liberated from the neo-Nazis, the Kharkov and Zaporozhye regions, where industry, agriculture and social infrastructure are beginning to work. A master plan has been developed for the complete restoration of Mariupol over the next three years. This year, work will be carried out on 90 social facilities.

The activity of law enforcement and judicial bodies continues unabated – the perpetrators of crimes against civilians in Donbass will be punished to the fullest extent of the law, and not by primitive, caveman methods that do not deliver justice (not even by lynching), but rather spew hatred and aggression in the Kiev-controlled territories. You have seen gruesome footage of people being tied to poles, doused with chemicals, and beaten (including women, the elderly, and children) simply because someone thought that they were "not loyally committed" to the Kiev regime. No provocations by Kiev will prevent the normalisation of life in these territories.

Four days ago, the Ukrainian Armed Forces committed yet another war crime by carrying out a missile strike against a detention facility in Yelenovka using the American HIMARS multiple rocket launcher. The missile hit the building housing fighters from the Azov criminal group who surrendered in May 2022 at Mariupol's Azovstal plant.

Why did the Kiev regime strike a detention centre for Ukrainian prisoners of war? The reason is that they started testifying and sharing information about the atrocities they had committed against Donbass civilians, exposing facts with numbers, dates and locations at hand. Having witnessed these crimes, these prisoners of war are

now viewed as a threat to Vladimir Zelensky's regime. Kiev, our so-called Western partners, and liberals around the world have been screaming for the past four of five months: "What Nazis?", "There is no one there," "No xenophobic crimes were committed there." Now the fighters who left Azovstal presented evidence on what they were doing there. In fact, they were acting as part of the Ukrainian Armed Forces rather than on their own. Kiev believes them to be dangerous witnesses who must be destroyed. It is for this reason that they simply pressed the launch button and fired the US-supplied weapons using location data also provided by the US. So cynical, and so simple. At the same time, this sits really well with the Western approach: eliminate those who, only yesterday, served you in good faith, swore allegiance to you and performed your criminal orders believing them to be reasonable and consistent with Ukraine's national interests.

We have already seen the same thing happen in other parts of the world. Take the Middle East – there was always a point at which Washington either betrayed all its proxies or eliminated them. The West created Osama bin Laden who studied in the West and benefitted from its support. Newspapers wrote about him saying that he was a man who chose the path of democracy. Then, he became an enemy and was killed, with Washington applauding the move. This is the way the United States settles its scores with all those who used to relay its will. Today's Western mentality is all about villainy and hypocrisy.

The missile strike against the detention facility killed more than 50 members of the criminal groups that left Azovstal and surrendered. It is obvious that the prospect of Azov fighters uncovering the horrible truth about the combat methods and war crimes committed by the Ukrainian nationalists trained in NATO countries and using Western weapons, frightened the Ukrainian authorities and their Western curators because it would shock public opinion and stun Vladimir Zelensky's regime. The fighters started sharing details on the "technicalities," including recruitment, training, the goals they pursued, the weapons they received, and who called the shots. As soon as they opened their mouths, the Kiev regime decided to shut

them up, despite the fact that these fighters had sworn their allegiance to Kiev. What is even more cynical is that despite the irrefutable evidence, the Ukrainian authorities tried to pin the blame for the missile strike on Russian and Donbass allied forces.

Russia calls on the international community to deliver a principled and impartial assessment of the crime perpetrated by the Ukrainian nationalists in Yelenovka. “Astonishing” statements by representatives of international organisations came to my attention. Asked by journalists what they thought about these developments, they responded that they lacked “first-hand” information. Did they have any on Bucha, or Kramatorsk? Which would-be first-hand sources are worthy of providing them with background information for their comments? I would like to see their list of first-hand sources. In other instances, nothing prevents them from quoting unverified social media accounts and data from NGOs. In this case, there was more than enough information out there, but for some reason it was not viewed as first-hand information. What an elaborate balancing act.

We hope that the specialised UN bodies and experts from the International Committee of the Red Cross who facilitated the evacuation of civilians from Azovstal in May 2022 will not shy away from our invitation to take part in an investigation of this situation.

In addition, we are looking forward to fruitful cooperation with UN and ICRC representatives in obtaining information on the conditions of detention of Russian, DPR and LPR military personnel in Ukraine. We are still seeing what used to be referred to as double standards. What we are witnessing now are not just double standards, but criminal negligence when covering and assessing the ongoing developments. ICRC representatives demand that they be given access in Russia to detention facilities for Ukrainian prisoners of war and members of the Ukrainian nationalist groups, especially from Azov, who surrendered. At the same time, they have remained silent on their efforts regarding Russian, DPR and LPR military personnel held captive in Ukraine.

The crimes committed by the Kiev regime were not limited to eliminating its former fellow fighters in Yelenovka. It keeps shelling peaceful cities and communities across DPR, LPR and Ukraine's liberated territories using 155 mm and 120 mm calibre guns, as well as multiple rocket launchers and Tochka-U missile systems.

Last week, central Donetsk, Makeyevka and Novolugansky were shelled with the banned Lepestok anti-personnel mines. I read about this in the Russian media and on social media. The journalists who reported on this were asking: Where are the Western journalists? Where are the specialised Western NGOs to speak out against using these weapons? They stay silent. They do not see anything. Is it that they lack first-hand information, once again? Here you have it. We are the ones sharing it.

In the Zaporozhye Region, the Ukrainian Armed Forces shelled grain depots in Energodar and Kamenka-Dneprovskaya many times. We regret to note that yet again the Western countries and international structures have failed to notice this and failed to deliver their assessment of the shelling by Ukraine. Or are we talking about the wrong kind of food here? Is there something wrong with these grain depots? There are the ones that are untouchable, for example in the Odessa port, which should not be shelled, while the ones in the DPR territory are not the same. Do they stand out in some way? Or maybe the wrong people grew these crops? Why is nobody mentioning this?

We noted the new "holiday" proclaimed by the Kiev regime when it declared July 28 Ukrainian Statehood Day. President Vladimir Zelensky referred to Ukraine as a "free, sovereign and independent state and the only legitimate successor of Kievan Rus." One gets the impression that they have all lost their minds over there. It will not take long before they start ordaining each other as princes and referring to one another as overlords. What kind of obscurantism is that?

As Sergey Lavrov wrote in his article for Izvestia newspaper, staging provocations is a favourite method of Western politics. This becomes ridiculous when not just Slavic nations, but all countries

understand the absurdity of these statements. Much has been said about the Ukrainian authorities falsifying history and the actual roots of Kiev's neo-Nazi regime. Why look so deep into the past? Look at the chevrons of the Ukrainian fighters. Do you know who their actual and legitimate predecessors are? Judging by the chevrons that fighters from the Azov battalion have on their sleeves, they are successors of the Nazis. This is the answer. Everyone knows this all too well. Leave Kievan Rus alone and do not touch it with your filthy, bloody hands.

We can hardly speak of Ukraine's "freedom and independence" today. This country has gone beyond losing the sovereignty it had. In fact, the Kiev government has not just sold out or pawned its sovereignty (this way it would have at least received some dividends), but has squandered it – this is the appropriate term to use for this issue so that everyone understands. There is no freedom to speak of. The West now holds Ukraine in servitude. For many years now, the Western countries have been running Ukraine from the outside. What kind of freedom, sovereignty or independence are we speaking about if foreign nationals have not only worked in the Ukrainian government as advisors but have run the country without even speaking the Ukrainian language, which is supposed to be their mother tongue? They had foreign passports and worked through interpreters without any links to today's Ukrainian statehood. They were parachuted to run the country from the outside. What kind of freedom, sovereignty and independence are we speaking about, if all subsoil resources, the riches of the country, everything it has is managed by Western business people, corporations, companies or people lobbying for the US political establishment? Show me where this freedom is. You will not even find any external attributes: there are no independent media outlets, there are no alternative parties, there is no one who could share opinions on what is going on in the country freely and openly. Many simply got killed. Even an official negotiator was killed "while he was being detained" on Kiev streets without any trial or investigation. Is this some kind of distorted understanding of fundamental principles? It is telling that the Ukrainian parliament passed a law on the special status of the Poles, giving them equal rights with the

Ukrainian nationals. This was an act of delegating statehood to the citizens of a foreign nation.

Ukraine has been administered by the West for many years now, and the West has been using Ukraine in its geopolitical designs as a tool to fight Russia. This is what happened to a state after it became sovereign and independent for the first time in its history.

Against this backdrop, accusations of Russia seeking to destroy Ukrainian statehood are cynical. The Kiev regime went down this road a long time ago. It was the West that destroyed Ukrainian statehood to serve its own interests, so that it would be easier to manage the mechanism for countering Russia. They turned Ukraine into a neo-Nazi state dependent on the West. Why neo-Nazi? Because this is the simplest way to recruit people. What can be easier than explaining to people why they must hate their neighbours? Just because the colour of their eyes is different, or the shape of their noses, or ears, or they had some contradictions a long time ago. Many have done this before. In this case, we can see that this process has been turbocharged: instead of decades it only took several years. On our watch, the state turned into a horrifying, decaying mechanism imbued with neo-Nazi and xenophobic ideology.

Once again, this confirms that Russia was right when setting the goals and objectives of the special military operation to denazify and demilitarise Ukraine, protect DPR and LPR and remove the threats to its security. The leaders of our country have said as much many times.

## Vadim Skibitsky's statements to UK’s The Telegraph

As I have already said, I would like to elaborate on US weapons supplies and the United States’ involvement in Ukraine. Spokesman for the Ukrainian Defence Ministry’s Chief Directorate of Intelligence Vadim Skibitsky gave an interview to UK’s The Telegraph (this time,

they managed to pull it off without Vladimir Zelensky's wife posing for the picture, although it remains to be seen what looks better). Here is what he said and how the media reported it. Skibitsky represents a military institution. He is an official who knows the situation from within and is authorised to make comments on behalf of the Kiev regime.

He said that the UK and the US provided everything from information to equipment for military intelligence purposes, as well as "minute-to-minute, real-time information [of] all kinds." When asked how the HIMARS multiple-launch rocket systems have so precisely targeted Russian assets, Vadim Skibitsky said that "in this case in particular, we use real-time information" (which means information from Western intelligence agencies).

He said that "US officials are not providing direct targeting information, which would potentially undermine their case for not being direct participants in the war." However, he suggested there was a level of consultation between intelligence officials of both countries prior to launching missiles that would allow Washington to stop any potential attacks if they were "unhappy with the intended target."

No need to look anywhere else for evidence of US involvement in military action in Ukraine. The US is not just training the Ukrainian military to use the weapons it supplies. In this case, the US has taken on the function of gun layers. I am not very good with military terminology, because this is not my area of expertise, but this is how things stand. The US offers targeting information and takes on the role of (target) spotters, i.e., people who provide information in real time about targets and use satellite data to this effect. All this is happening via intelligence-to-intelligence channels and using US weapons, which means that the United States is directly involved. This is what we need to know about whether it is maintaining a distance in this situation. The US is fully involved. It made no secret of its bias before. Moreover, it went even further lately by saying that Russia must be defeated on the battlefield so it was not the right time for the Kiev regime to sit down at the negotiating table. Now the Kiev officials make no bones about the US being involved

militarily not only through arms supplies, but also by managing Ukraine Armed Forces personnel and designating targets. Can you imagine what is going on? The Ukrainian Armed Forces are coordinating their targets with the United States to carry out strikes using US weapons. Who can be sure that it is the Ukrainian Armed Forces who are operating these weapons? They probably assist the actual operators rather than handle the weapons themselves. This is how it works. The US instructors have been working in Ukraine for many years. There were daily contacts between various agencies, primarily military and law enforcement bodies.

Let me remind you that representatives of the US special services have been occupying entire floors in Ukrainian government institutions for many decades now. Now they are giving direct orders on choosing targets and carrying out strikes. I think that questions about whether the United States is involved in combat action, on whose side and in what way have become irrelevant. They have already revealed everything, all by themselves.